(TAMEDAY Guide

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friday, october 29, 2010

K-State vs. Oklahoma State

HOME SWEET HOME



Fireworks light up the sky above Bill Snyder Family Stadium after K-State's win against Missouri State earlier this season. The Wildcats will face Oklahoma State on Saturday in their first home game since a loss to Nebraska on Oct. 7.

Homecoming game pits 'Cats against Cowboys

Ashley Dunkak

After falling to Baylor in a shoot-out in Waco, Texas, K-State is home again to take the field against Oklahoma State on Saturday at 11 a.m. Last week proved a challenge for the 5-2 Wildcats, but this Saturday could bring an even greater one — as powerful as the Bears' offense was, the Cowboys' is better.

"Leading passer, leading rusher, leading offense, you name it and they have it," said head coach Bill Snyder. "They are pretty proficient at what they do and who they do it with. Their running back and quarterback have been excellent through the course of the year. They have a lot of wide receivers, and one has been truly special for them and is a fine player. They do it all well."

With the No. 2 scoring offense in the nation, the Cowboys rely heavily on the pass — or have so far — and average 350 yards through the air. Passes come courtesy of Brandon Weeden, the top quarterback in the Big 12 Conference. Of course, the Cowboys complement the air barrage with 150 rushing yards per game. Their favorite ball carrier is Big 12-leading rusher Kendall

However, that wide receiver who has been so special for them, Justin Blackmon, was arrested at 3:45 a.m. on Tuesday after being clocked going 92 miles per hour in a 60-mph zone and was charged with driving

under the influence.
On Wednesday, the Cowboys announced that Blackmon will sit out this weekend while serving a onegame suspension.

Only one game past the season's halfway point, Blackmon has 62 catches for 1,112 yards and 14 touchdowns. He had been the frontrunner for the 2010 Biletnikoff

Ashley Dunkak

strikes téammates.

happen?

A: With Manhattan High, I learned

a lot about work ethic. We work ex-

tremely hard, and coming here, it just kind of builds upon how hard you

have to work. Being at Kansas State,

you have to work extra hard — you're

at a Division I program — because the talent you play against is equal or

Q: Growing up in Manhattan with a dream of playing at K-State and in the NFL, did you ever feel like it wouldn't

A: I always felt like anything can happen. I've just got to work hard, take advantage of opportunities that

Award, but that might go away with

Snyder said the obvious approach to stifling Oklahoma State's offense would be stopping the run first, but he can remember stopping the run

and getting beat by the pass.
"I think that it is a dual thing,"
Snyder said. "You have to be able to
defend against both. If you stop the pass and make them one-sided, they have the capacity to run the ball. For a team that can do both, you have to be able to stop both."

Oklahoma State is coming off its

touchdown return.

While Coffman has thrown for more yardage and rushed for more touchdowns, and for the first time this season, the offensive attack is more of a mixture, a tipped pass that led to an interception of Coffman — who has four this season, compared to eight passing touch-downs — hurt the Wildcats this week. So did a fumble by senior running back Daniel Thomas, who ran for 113 yards in the game.

"We certainly need consistency and even more consistency," Snyder

now down two of their premiere receivers. Brodrick Smith went down against Nebraska — one game after the limit for medical redshirt, so he most likely will not get another year of eligibility — and last weekend Tramaine Thompson was injured, and Snyder said he doubted the team will have him against Oklahoma State.

Coffman said the offense feels fairly confident in its overall ability, but looking back on film, the players see their mistakes and know they have to improve.

"I think we are all feeling pretty good," Coffman said. "But looking back at the tape against Baylor, I felt like there were a few opportunities where we had the chance to do something positive that would have helped us win the game and we could not get it done. So we still have quite a bit of stuff that we need

Snyder mentioned the offense went three-and-out five times against Baylor: two came on turnovers, two came because of penalties and one was a missed assignment.

'It is just one of those situations that makes you understand that every play counts," said Braden Wilson, sophomore fullback. "If we had just one play on one of the drives where we did not score that we could have converted on, there would have been a different outcome in the game. So it really makes you understand how important

every snap of every game is."

This week, K-State has the home field advantage, and after last week's stinging loss, perhaps the Wildcats have some extra motivation.

"I think everybody is a little hos-tile right now," Wilson said. "Everybody is a little upset. We wanted that win against Baylor, and we needed that win. We just do not want to lose

BY THE NUMBERS

Numbers to consider when K-State plays OSU on Saturday

-Consecutive K-State games against Big 12 South teams

The first of this set occurred last Saturday at Baylor. While the Bears bested the Wildcats in the end, K-State hung right with them the entire time. There were plays made on offense — lots of points, obviously; defense — forcing an interception; and special teams — everyone executing in order to spring senior running back William Powell for a kickoff return touchdown. Of course, the "L" means there were some opportunities on which the Wildcats did not capitalize. To compete with this Oklahoma State team and its prolific offense, K-State will have to minimize errors. That's an area in which it has improved, but as always, there is room to grow.

48.3

-Average points per game for OSU

This number, certainly, is evidence of that whole No. 2-scoringoffense-in-the-country business. That could be half the final score in a basketball game. According to averages, OSU generally has the ball for about five minutes less than its opponent does, but it makes up for lost time with ... well, everything.

1,031
-Yards by OSU running back Kendall

This guy is not that big, physically: 5-feet-8-inches tall, 200 pounds. His numbers, however, are huge. On 161 attempts, he has more than 1,000 yards, 12 touchdowns and averages nearly 150 yards per game. What's kind of cool is this: K-State senior running back Daniel Thomas' numbers are not at all far behind Hunter's.

-Touchdowns by OSU quarterback Brandon Weeden

It would be an enormous feat to shut this guy down. It seems that hassling him should be the Wildcats No. 1 priority on Saturday. Sacks aren't even the objective, necessarily; K-State just needs to hurry him, hit him as he's throwing, get hands up in his face ... bring pressure. The Wildcats are capable of the intensity necessary to stop Weeden and the Cowboys, but it will most likely take more than what we have seen so far.

1,112-Receiving yards by OSU receiver Justin Blackmon

Blackmon, a sophomore, leads the nation in receiving yards, as well as touchdowns (14). However, none of that matters this weekend, as Blackmon was suspended by head coach Mike Gundy after his arrest on a driving under the influence charge earlier this week. If Weeden wants to test the Wildcats through the air, he'll have to do so without his favorite target.

36.9

-Yards per game for K-State wide receiver Tramaine Thompson

Thompson has been a boost for the receiving corps as well as different special teams units, but he will most likely sit out against Oklahoma State. The redshirt freshman got hurt last game, and head coach Bill Snyder said he doubts he will be available this week. He didn't offer any further speculation, but then, that's just how Snyder is about injuries.

12-4-1

-K-State record under Snyder when playing for sixth win of season

Who knows what factors contribute to this number? It could have to do with scheduling. It could have to do with the program's historic season under Snyder. It could have to do with motivation to get into a bowl game. Whatever the case, the Wildcats have a good reputation playing for postseason eligibility. While they did not look their best last week, a home game could bring back the spark.

-Compiled by Ashley Dunkak

K-STATE VS. OKLAHOMA STATE

When: Saturday, 11:10 a.m. Where: Bill Snyder Family Stadium Television: Fox Sports Net Online: twitter.com/sportscollegian Radio: K-State Sports Network Series: Oklahoma State leads 34-22

first loss this season, one in which they scored 41 points and still lost to Nebraska, who is ranked No. 14 in the nation in both the BCS and AP polls and who put up 51 points on the Cowboys' defense.

K-State's offense has steadily progressed, with senior quarter-back Carson Coffman leading the way. After all, the offense did manage 42 points against Baylor though, to clarify, that's actually 35 since senior running back William Powell and the special teams kickoff return unit get credit for a 100-yard said. "The turnovers are a concern, needs to be enhanced some more."

To make consistency just a little more complicated, the Wildcats are

and he has held his turnover ratio down quite well during the course of the season. Two turnovers and the defense only holds for three points, but that is still a major issue. What you are talking about is not only three points, but maybe 100-plus yards in field position, which makes a dramatic difference in points as well. I like the enhanced consistency that he is playing with, but it still

Junior wide come my way. Coach Smith always says, "Take advantage of your oppor-Cole Batunities and good things will come champ your way," and that's just the way I believe and it's got to happen. Cole Bachamp is a junior wide rewalks [·] ceiver for K-State. A native of Manthrough the tunnel hattan and quarterback at Manhattan High, he grew up watching Michael Bishop and Darren Sproles and always wanted to play for the Wildcats. Ba-champ has been playing on special teams, and against Baylor he also got Q: What was your career after high school and before K-State? before K-State's game against Iowa State at Ar-A: Coming out of high school, I didn't really know what I wanted to do. I was looking for the best opportunity in and made a 23-yard catch. He credits the coaches, including wide receivers coach Michael Smith, with preparrowhead where I could go in and play at any school. Butler Community College Stadium. ing everyone to step up when injury Bachamp played gave me that opportunity because I football at was going to be switching positions to wide receiver, and I kind of thought Manhattan Q: How did your time in high school prepare you to play at K-State? High School that would help me learn the position before before I got to a different school, so joining the

MHS grad discusses football career in Manhattan

Q: How did you end up coming to K-State?

going to Butler really helped me out with playing receiver. I was glad I could come to Kansas State and play

A: Me and coach (Matt) Wallerstedt, who was here when coach (Ron) Prince was here, we stayed close. He's a Manhattan guy, so I talked to him every once in a while, and I kind of mentioned to him that I'd love to get an opportunity to come back here and play. He allowed me to do that.

See BACHAMP, Page G4



PAGE G2: MATCHUP AND COLUMN | PAGE G3: SCOUTING REPORT | PAGE G4: BACHAMP Q&A CONT.

MATCHING UP







the game.

Statistically, there's really no

comparing K-State's offense to

the unit the Cowboys will bring

to Snyder Family Stadium this

Saturday. Oklahoma State's of-

fense includes one of the nation's

top players in all three facets of

back Kendall Hunter. Hunter

has garnered plenty of national

attention this season, as he cur-

rently ranks third in the country

with 1,031 rushing yards. That

could mean disaster for the

Wildcats, who dropped to No.

118 in rush defense after last

Cowboy receiver Justin Black-

mon was suspended earlier this

week after being arrested on a driving under the influence

charge. Blackmon currently

leads the nation with 1,112 re-

quarterback Brandon Weeden.

He's only a first-year starter, but

Weeden has had no problem

managing the Oklahoma State

offense this season. He's thrown

for 2,249 yards, which ranks

However, there's still junior

ceicing yards and 14 scores.

K-State caught a break when

weekend's showing at Baylor.

First, there's senior running

OFFENSE



After K-State's 45-13 loss to Nebraska on Oct. 7, many people were ready to throw in the towel on the Wildcats' offense. But, since that game, the unit has responded nicely, scoring 87 points in its last two games. Quarterback Carson Coffman has posted solid numbers in his last two contests, as

After back-to-back forgettable games, running back Daniel Thomas has returned to form. The senior has posted 204 yards and three touchdowns in his last two outings. He'll look to put up big numbers again this weekend against an Oklahoma State run defense that is allowing 137.7 yards per

he's averaged 207.5 yards.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, two of the team's top receiving threats — Brodrick Smith and Tramaine Thompson — have been lost to injury in recent weeks. That won't help Coffman's progression and likely means Thomas will be heavily relied on.

Bottom line: Oklahoma State's offense has much more proven weapons.



SPECIAL TEAMS



This weekend's game features two teams that have put together solid seasons from a special teams standpoint, as both teams are relatively strong in all facets. Oklahoma State features of

the nation's best punter-kicker tandems in Quinn Sharp and Dan Bailey. Sharp, a sophomore, has recorded 29 punts this season. His numbers have been stellar, as he ranks second nationally with a 48.2-yard av-

Bailey, a senior, has been perfect in 15 tries during his final season, including a 2-of-2 mark from beyond 50 yards. He's seen time in each season since 2007, and has made 45 of 66 attempts in his career.

Receiver Josh Cooper owns Cowboys' only return touchdown of the season, which came on a punt return. Cornerback Justin Gilbert has handled the bulk of the return duties this season.

Missouri

Nebraska

K-State

Colorado

Kansas

TEAM

Baylor

Texas

Oklahoma

Texas Tech

Oklahoma State

Iowa State

BIG 12 NORTH STANDINGS

BIG 12 SOUTH STANDINGS

RECORD

7-0 (3-0)

6-1 (2-1)

5-2 (2-2)

4-4 (2-2)

3-4 (0-3)

2-5 (0-3)

RECORD

6-2 (3-1)

6-1 (2-1)

6-1 (2-1)

4-3 (2-2)

4-3 (2-3)

While he might not be able to match his counterpart, K-State punter Ryan Doerr has posted solid numbers during his sophomore campaign. He's recorded 30 punts this season, on which he's averaged 41.6

Senior kicker Josh Cherry never got a field goal opportunity last weekend, but he did connect on all six of his extra point attempts to remain perfect on the season.

The Wildcats got their first special teams touchdown of the season against the Bears when running back William Powell took a kick return 100 yards for a score. Powell's average of 34.1 yards per return currently leads

Neither team seems to have a glaring weakness in the special teams department, but Powell's ability to break off long returns gives the Wildcats' a slim ad-

NEXT GAME

at Nebraska

vs. Missouri

vs. Kansas

at Oklahoma

at Iowa State

NEXT GAME

vs. Colorado

at K-State

vs. Baylor

at Texas A&M

at Texas

vs. Oklahoma State

DEFENSE



For the most part, the Wildcats and Cowboys match up evenly on the defensive side of the ball. However, that's not necessarily a good thing for either squad, as both teams have posted some lackluster numbers this season.

After allowing 45 points and more than 400 rushing yards to Nebraska, K-State's defense seemingly turned a corner in its 59-7 win at Kansas. But, last weekend, the number inflated once again. Baylor running back Jay Finley torched the Wildcats for 250 yards, and quarterback Robert Griffin III threw for 404 more as K-State dropped a 47-42 decision.

Prior to that game, the Wildcats had taken a "bend-butdon't-break" mentality throughout the 2010 campaign. Each week, the Wildcats seemingly gave up chunks of yards, but did just enough to keep opponents off the scoreboard. That changed against Nebraska and Baylor, which have accounted for both of K-State's losses. Another poor defensive showing this week will likely lead to the same result.

Like the Wildcats, the Cowboys were on the wrong end of a high-scoring affair last weekend, as they dropped a 51-41 slugfest to Nebraska. Husker quarterback Taylor Martinez shredded the Óklahoma State pass defense for 323 yards and five touchdowns. Martinez also ran for 112 yards in the contest.

It's obviously unlikely that Coffman will post those kinds of numbers in this weekend's game. But, seeing the Cowboys' secondary get exposed should provide some hope for the Wildcats, who — for the better part of the year — have been extremely run-heavy.

As a team, Oklahoma State has recorded 17 sacks this season, but the starting front four hasn't fared well against the run. The unit is allowing 137.7 yards per game, which will likely mean several carries for

If the stat sheet is an accurate representation of each team's defensive unit, expect another high-scoring game. Neither defense has been anything to write home about, but the Cowboys should have a slight edge.

PREDICTION

COWBOYS 42 WILDCATS 31

A quick look at the stat sheet indicates that this game will be reminiscent of K-State's last outing. Both teams have shown they can put up a lot of points, but neither has proven to be capable of stopping its opponent.

The Cowboys have the luxury of elite weapons in the passing, rushing and receiving game. Hunter will likely get plenty of chances to carve up K-State's front seven, and the numbers indicate he'll have no trouble doing so.

If that doesn't work, expect Weeden to go to the air often, which will mean a big day for him and the Cowboys' receiving corps.

Long story short: the Wildcats will probably need their best defensive performance of the year to pull off an upset.

Thomas obviously has the same playmaker capabilities of Hunter or Weeden, but unfortunately for the Wildcats, he can't beat Oklahoma State by himself. Coffman will have to have another big day — probably bigger than any he's had this year — to give his team a chance. K-State's top priority will have to be keeping the Cowboys' offense off the field.

The Wildcats have some exterior factors working in their favor this weekend, such as their own fans, but they'll need just about everything to go right if they want to leave Bill Snyder Family Stadium with a

Barring some big breaks in State's favor, expect Oklahoma State's offense to light up the scoreboard like it has all season. The Wildcats just don't have the weapons to win this one.

-Compiled by Justin Nutter

OSU offense has potential to create problems for K-State



After a close loss to the Baylor Bears, K-State - still one win away from bowl eligibility - will face the highpowered offense of Oklahoma State on Saturday at Bill Snyder Family Stadium.

The Wildcats lost their opportunity to earn a bowl bid when they gave up a seasonhigh 683 yards at Baylor. More than 400 of the Bears' yards came from quarterback . Robert Griffin III.

The defense suffered tremendously last week, giving up big play after big play to Griffin and running back Jay Finley who accumulated 250 yards and two touchdowns on the ground. Snyder put the Wildcat defense performance in words by saying: "We didn't have people where they needed to be. That is our issue. That is our problem. We have to coach them better."

If this was truly the case, then the defense hasn't been coached well in a lot of games this season or it has been simply outplayed. The unit has given up 587 yards to Nebraska and 440 yards to a Division two team in Missouri State. I think it is a bit of a team effort issue along with facing more athleticism on the other side of the ball. Excluding the KU game, the defensive line has been silent the last couple games and the secondary hasn't been a big factor either. Tysyn Hartman hasn't picked off a pass at all this season after intercepting five passes last season.

Unfortunately this week, the road to a win doesn't get any easier. Oklahoma State is first in the Big 12 Conference in points per game, and features prime threats in running back Kendall Hunter and quarterback Brandon Weeden. Hunter is a dark horse candidate for the Heisman Trophy gaining more than 1,000 yards and 12 touchdowns. Weeden leads the nation in passing yards with 2,249 and has also tossed 21 touchdowns.

Wide receiver Justin

Blackmon has also been a key factor to the Cowboys success, showing skills of former Cowboy Dez Bryant, earning 1,112 yards and 14 touchdowns through seven games to fill his shoes. Unfortunately for Blackmon, a sophomore, he will miss Saturday's game by suspension for his recent arrest on a DUI charge.
This game should be a bit

of a wake up call for K-State. The season is still young, and these next two weeks leave a door open in earning a bowl bid. K-State can't afford to go on a losing streak by giving up this game and possibly the next against Texas. I think it would be much easier on the team if they can get a win against the Cowboys or Longhorns so they can focus on Colorado and North Texas down the road. Not to mention, K-State also has to travel to Columbia to take on the resurgent Missouri Tigers.

Oklahoma State presents a tremendous offense, but its defense is a bit inconsistent in the points department. The Cowboys have surrendered at least 20 points to lower Division I teams and gave up 51 points to Nebraska last week. Cornerback Andrew

McGee leads the team in interceptions with three, but Oklahoma State's secondary should be held in check as the Wildcats will most likely run the ball a lot more with Daniel Thomas and William

This game has turned into a high potential win chance for the Wildcats with the absence of Blackmon. It's a home game for the team and by now it should realize it needs to start playing better in order to have a strong finish.

The Cowboy offense might rely heavily on the running game like K-State. Blackmon's suspension hurts the Cowboys, but I don't think it will affect the outcome. With the nation's leading passer, I think Weeden can find more targets to fill Blackmon's shoes.

I think the Cowboys will win because their offense will still compete and be tough to handle. I expect to see a lot of points scored in the game, and Oklahoma State should come out on top.

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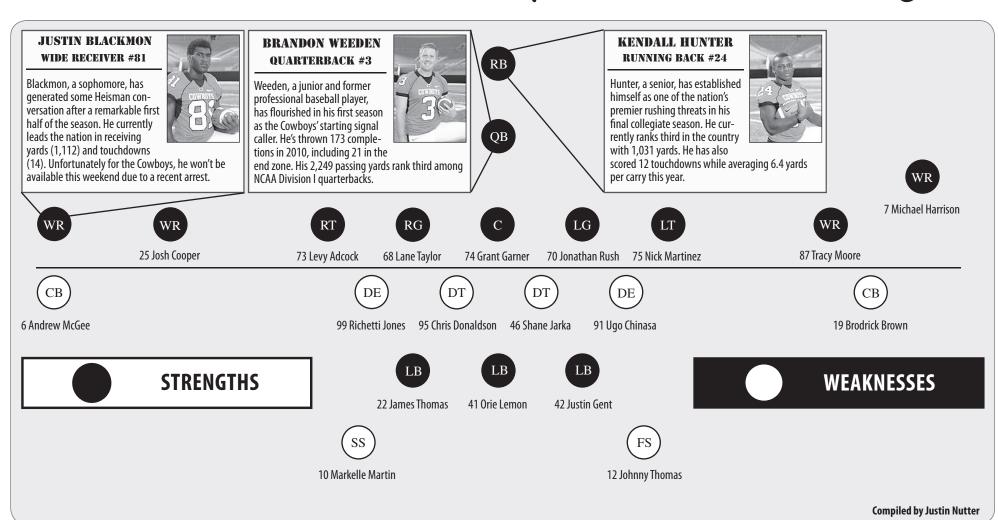




SCOUTING REPORT



No. 20 Oklahoma State Cowboys (6-1 Overall, 2-1 Big 12)



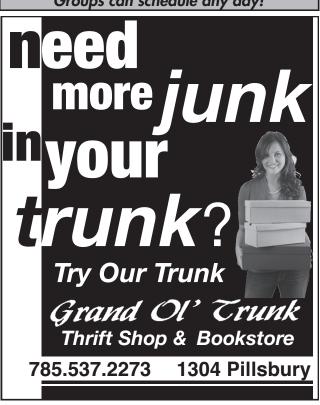




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BACHAMP | Junior recorded first catch of season last weekend at Baylor

Continued from Page G1

Q: How has playing quarterback in high school help you as a receiver?

A: Playing quarterback really helps you learn the entire offense; it makes you learn every position on the field. It really helps with your leadership, it helps with all aspects of football. Quarterback really helped me out with other positions just by knowing the entire game of football.

Q: How did the transition go for you?

A: It was tough at the beginning because I didn't know how to run routes, I didn't catch the ball all that much, but now I've gotten used to receiver and I've learned a lot from my coaches. It's fun.

Q: Who got you into the game of football?

A: Just my friends I had hung out with. They all played football, and I love the game of football. My friends kind of got me into the school. High school, it was one of the best times of my life because you get to play with all your friends and everybody you grew up with. It was fun.

Q: Do you think the offense is better balanced now than it was early

A: I think we've been balanced for the entire season; we just haven't made the plays to make it seem like we're balanced. I think we're making a lot more plays throwing the ball because receivers are doing the correct things and kind of spreading things out for Daniel (Thomas) to start making plays.

Q: What went through your mind, knowing you might have the chance because Tramaine Thompson got hurt?

A: I wasn't really all that nervous. With laying on special teams and knowing the speed of the game, practicing against our defense, knowing the speed of the game, I really wasn't that nervous. I was more excited than anything to get an opportunity to play.

Q: With both Thompson and Brodrick Smith having fallen with injuries this season, how do wide receivers try to prepare to avoid injury?

A: You can't really expect to get hurt like that. Freak things happen during games — you land wrong or get hit weird — you can't really know when something like that's going to happen. But we work out a lot during the week, strengthen our bodies and just try to stay strong physically to try to endure the game of football.

Q: Is it more receiving to play on the special teams unit or as a wide receiver?

A: I think they're equal. We've got one of the best kickoff return teams in the nation, and we really pride ourselves on working hard because all of us want to have the best kickoff return team in the nation, so we work really hard at that. But it's really to be able to contribute on the offensive side as well. You help the team, better our team success.

Q: Who were K-State

players you watched growing up?

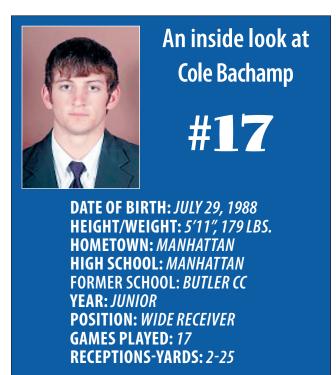
A: Growing up, of course Michael Bishop and Darren Sproles, those are all guys I looked up to when I was younger. There's tons of K-State guys that, as a kid, I would watch and I still watch now, in the NFL, so that's always kind of driven me to be the best.

Q: What is the camaraderie like between you and the other wide receivers?

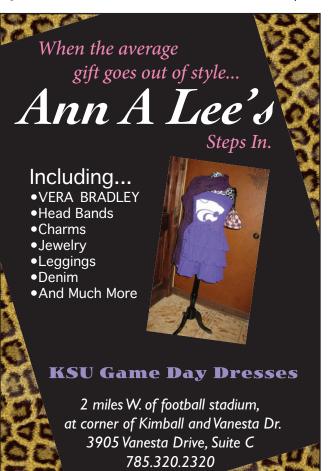
A: We're extremely close-knit; we do a lot of things together; we joke. We have a lot of fun as a unit, and that's key in the game is just to have fun. That's what coach Smith does. He gets us to work really hard, and we're a very tight-knit unit.

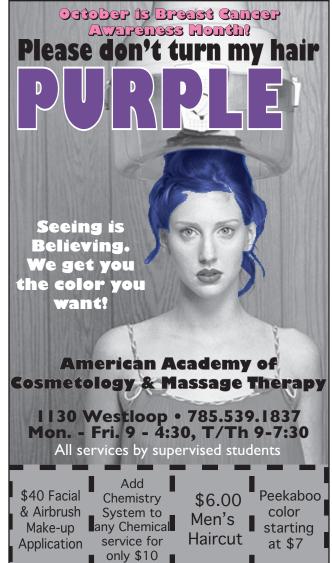
Q: What kind of role has your family played in your career?

A: I actually thought about this the other day. My family was very supportive. They made it to every game that I can think of, and that really means a lot to know that your family cares and wants to be there for you.



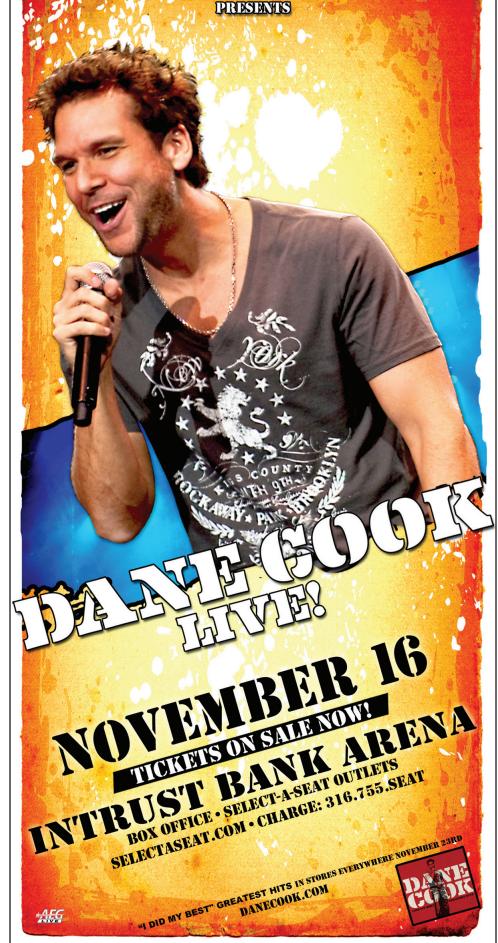












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